

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-7 (Canceled).

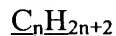
Claim 8 (Currently amended): A process for the continuous recirculation of the propene which has not been reacted in the oxidation of propene by means of hydroperoxide to give propene oxide, said propene is a mixture comprising propene and propane in a volume ratio of from about 97:3 to 95:5 and is present in the offgas stream formed during the oxidation, which comprises the steps (i) to (iii):

(i) separating the propene and propane from the offgas stream by absorption in a hydrocarbon mixture comprising more than 10 carbon atoms,

(ii) desorbing the propene and propane from the hydrocarbon mixture comprising more than 10 carbon atoms, wherein the mixture of propene and propane is separated off either in liquid form in a distillation column at a pressure of from 1 to 3 bar or in gaseous form at a pressure of from 1 to 3 bar and a temperature of from 50 to 100°C in a flash evaporation,

(iii) recirculating the propene obtained in step (ii) to the oxidation process, wherein the propene/propane mixture obtained after separation from the hydrocarbon mixture comprising more than 10 carbon atoms is separated into propene and propane in a C₃ splitter before recirculating the propene to the oxidation process, and

the hydrocarbon mixture is a mixture of long chain hydrocarbons of the formula:



wherein

n is an integer of from 13 to 15, and

the mixture comprises a tetradecane of the formula $C_{14}H_{30}$ in an amount of at least 10 % by weight.

Claim 9 (Currently amended): The process as claimed in claim 8, wherein the hydrocarbon mixture comprising more than 10 carbon atoms obtained after desorption of the olefin in step (ii) is recirculated to step (i).

Claim 10 (Currently amended): The process as claimed in claim 8, wherein the hydrocarbon mixture used is tetradecane.

Claim 11 (Currently amended): The process as claimed in claim 9, wherein the hydrocarbon mixture used is tetradecane.

Claim 12 (Previously presented): The process as claimed in claim 8, wherein the propene is absorbed at a pressure of from 3 to 6 bar and a temperature of from 5 to 35°C.

Claim 13 (Previously presented): The process as claimed in claim 9, wherein the propene is absorbed at a pressure of from 3 to 6 bar and a temperature of from 5 to 35°C.

Claim 14 (Previously presented): The process as claimed in claim 10, wherein the propene is absorbed at a pressure of from 3 to 6 bar and a temperature of from 5 to 35°C.

Claim 15 (Previously presented): The process as claimed in claim 8, wherein the offgas stream comprises inert gases and a small amount of oxygen.

Claim 16 (Previously presented): The process as claimed in claim 9, wherein the offgas stream comprises inert gases and a small amount of oxygen.

Claim 17 (Previously presented): The process as claimed in claim 15, wherein the offgas stream comprises nitrogen.

Claim 18 (Previously presented): The process as claimed in claim 16, wherein the offgas stream comprises nitrogen.

Claim 19 (Canceled).